



Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, February  
Testimony of Montana Wilderness Association on S

My name is Tim Baker. I am the Executive Director of the Montana Wilderness Association, and offer the following testimony on behalf of our 5,500 members.

I appear as a proponent of the concept behind SB 293, although the language of the bill needs to be amended before MWA can actually support it – so I've also offered amendments with my written testimony. If these amendments are substantially adopted, MWA will support SB 293.

Almost one year ago, the Montana Wilderness Association and two other conservation groups, reached an agreement with Sun Mountain Lumber, Pyramid Mountain Lumber, R-Y Timber, Smurfit Stone, and Roseburg Forest Products, regarding future management of the Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest.

This agreement provides a blueprint for active timber management, restoration work, and wilderness designation. The conservation and timber partners are committed to a working forest that puts logs on the trucks and keeps the mills running, and ensures that world-class fishing, hunting, and recreational opportunities are present for future generations.

Although not without critics on both sides, the partnership has been praised by Senator Baucus, Governor Schweitzer, Secretary of State Johnson, the Montana Logging Association, Montana Wildlife Federation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and numerous county commissions.

The agreement was possible because the partners see a big picture – they understand that “sustainable forests” means taking care of the whole – not just focusing on one part – a notion of “stewardship” that not only includes places for timber harvest, but also for active restoration work and wilderness.

That's where SB 293 fails, although I think the sponsors mean well. As written, SB 293 is still too focused on a narrow band of objectives, primarily related to timber management and harvest. The amendments we're offering today, if adopted, will give the bill a bigger vision and make it something that conservation groups like MWA can get behind.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer these comments and I will be available for questions.

Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee  
February 19, 2007  
Amendments to SB 293  
Offered by the Montana Wilderness Association

1. Page 1, line 4, strike "USE" and replace with "STEWARDSHIP"
2. Page 1, line 24, add new clause:  
"WHEREAS, innovative partnerships between traditional adversaries in federal forest management demonstrate that consensus-based solutions can be reached on landscape level projects on federal lands that integrate active forest management, restoration, and long-term custodial protections; and"
3. Page 1, line 30, strike "Use" and replace with "Stewardship"
4. Page 2, line 3, strike "management" and replace with "stewardship"
5. Page 2, line 5, after "be" insert "sustainably"
6. Page 2, line 7, add new (3):  
"(3) The legislature finds that sustainable forest stewardship of Montana's forests requires a balanced approach that ensures a stable timber supply, active restoration, healthy watersheds and wildlife habitat, wild areas for natural processes, and allowances for responsible recreational uses."  
Renumber existing (3) to (4)
7. Page 2, line 11, after "shall" insert "support the sustainable forest stewardship of private, state, and federal forests in Montana, and shall"
8. Page 2, line 12, strike (1) in its entirety, and renumber sections (2) through (9)
9. Page 2, line 26, strike all text on lines 26 and 27, and replace with  
"participate in and facilitate collaboration between traditional forest interests to reach consensus-based solutions on federal land management issues."